


64TH CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

WORKING TOGETHER
TO ACHIEVE STUDENT SUCCESS

It's not nothing:
For some, a unilateral loss is huge

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA
State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction


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Johanna Lynch
parent educator


BEGINNINGS for Parents of Children
who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing



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The emotional response to
the child's hearing loss is
independent of the degree of loss.

David Luterman, 2006

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Why we have two ears


- Directionality or localization
- Wider range of audibility
- Better sound quality
- Tolerate loud noises better

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What we know

Children with unilateral hearing loss were approximately 10 times more likely to fail a grade than their normal-hearing peers.

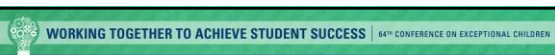
*Bess & Tharpe, 1984;
Oyler, Oyler, & Matkin, 1988*

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What we know

20% of children with unilateral hearing loss were judged by their teachers to have behavioral problems.

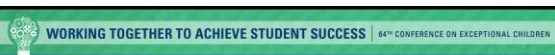
Bess and Tharpe, 1986



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A success story

- 12-year-old boy identified at 2 with a unilateral profound loss affecting right ear not present at NBHS, later progressed to bilateral
- Aided in better hearing ear
- Advocates well, still uses hearing aid with FM in middle school

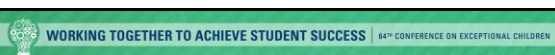


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Moving through grief

The key to a successful integration of hearing loss into a family is the degree to which parents are able to integrate hearing loss into their lives.


David Luterman, 2006



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Same loss, different views


- 6-year-old girls who would benefit from FM use in school
- Consistent with follow-up care and well educated in unilateral losses
- Both girls said to have behavior issues

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What we know


Children with unilateral hearing loss showed greater difficulty in the areas of behavior, energy, stress, social support and self-esteem.

Bess, et al., 1988

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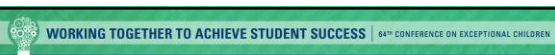
Why do we minimize?

- Others have more severe losses
- Children will most times develop speech/language appropriately
- Academically, they will get by and in most cases do "fine"
- Impact on quality of life isn't recognized as important

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No new research

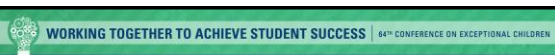
The information we share with parents is *30 years old*, and based on research completed on late-identified elementary school children who had no early support.



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What happens as a result

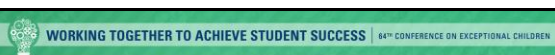
- Parents minimize the loss
- The issues are misunderstood
- Leads to frustration and stress in the family
- Delayed grief



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Use parent-friendly language

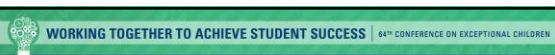
- What does localize mean?
- Preferential seating?
- Tell them what we already know about unilateral hearing loss



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Potential challenges

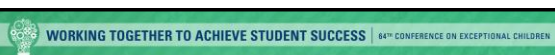
- Childhood games, sports
- Academic consequences
- Sensitivity to loud noises
- Functionality issues
- Holidays are stressful, often not fun



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Why didn't they tell us?

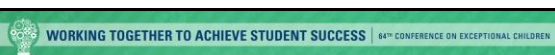
- 15-year-old boy unilateral profound identified at birth
- No supports in place but speech/language on target



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Why didn't they tell us?

- Bright student, behavior issues, anxiety, ADHD, hyperacusis
- IEP and behavior plan in place




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The disability is never in the audiogram, it's in the perception of the parents.

Parents of children with mild hearing loss seldom appreciate being told that they are lucky their child can hear so much.

For them it's still a loss for which they have a right to grieve.

"Children with Hearing Loss, A Family Guide"

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